



# PUBLIC HEALTH

In continuous publication since 1888

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### DESCRIPTION

An official journal of the [The Royal Society for Public Health](#) and a sister journal of [Public Health in Practice](#).

*Public Health* is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short reports on all aspects of the science, philosophy, and practice of **public health**.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver **public health services** and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of **public health programmes**, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

Published twelve times a year, *Public Health* considers [submissions](#) on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings.

These include:

- **Public health practice** and impact
- **Applied Epidemiology**
- Need or **impact assessments**
- **Health service** effectiveness, management and re-design
- **Health Protection** including control of communicable diseases
- **Health promotion** and **disease prevention**
- Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
- Public health **governance**, audit and quality
- Public health **law** and ethics
- Public health **policy** and comparisons
- Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the [Editors](#) will consider articles on any issue relating to public health.

*Public Health* also publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.

## IMPACT FACTOR

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2018: 1.696 © Clarivate Analytics Journal Citation Reports 2019

## ABSTRACTING AND INDEXING

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Scopus  
PubMed/Medline  
Current Contents  
Embase  
BIOSIS Citation Index  
Cambridge Scientific Abstracts  
Science Citation Index

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**Natalia Camicia**, Royal Society for Public Health, John Snow House, 59 Mansell Street, E1 8AN, London, United Kingdom, Fax: +44 (0) 207 265 7301

## GUIDE FOR AUTHORS

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Aims

Public Health is an international, multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal. It publishes original papers, reviews and short communications on all aspects of the science, philosophy and practice of public health.

It is aimed at all public health practitioners and researchers and those who manage and deliver public health services and systems. It will also be of interest to anyone involved in provision of public health programmes, the care of populations or communities and those who contribute to public health systems in any way.

#### Scope

Public Health considers submissions on any aspect of public health across age groups and settings. These include:

- Public health practice and impact
- Applied epidemiology
- Need or impact assessments
- Health service effectiveness, management and re-design
- Health protection including control of communicable diseases
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Evaluation of public health programmes or interventions
- Public health governance, audit and quality
- Public health law and ethics
- Public health policy and comparisons
- Capacity in public health systems and workforce

This is not an exhaustive list and the Editors will consider articles on any issue relating to the health of populations or the public.

#### Reviews and Supplements

Public Health publishes invited articles, reviews and supplements from leading experts on topical issues.

Organizations or individuals who wish to present proposals for supplements should contact the Editors at [public.health@rsph.org.uk](mailto:public.health@rsph.org.uk) for a copy of the specific guidance on the publication of supplements.

#### Impact on Practice

Papers describing original research impacting on public health practice are particularly encouraged. Those describing a particular event (e.g. an outbreak of infectious disease) should be submitted as soon as possible. Fast track publication of suitable articles is possible; please contact the Editorial Office regarding this.

Papers are invited from anywhere in the world, and so authors are asked to ensure that sufficient context is provided for all readers to appreciate their contribution.

#### *Types of paper*

The types of papers that may be considered for inclusion are:

- 1) Original research, including evaluations of public health interventions or programmes, and public health practice original work on audit, workforce or resource development (see section 4.2);
- 2) Short communications (see section 4.3) and;
- 3) Review papers, which include meta-analysis and systematic review (see section 4.4)

We also consider the following papers:

- 1) Letters (see section 4.5);
- 2) Celebrating Public Health Lives: biographical articles about named individuals, living or deceased, who have made a special contribution to public health (see section 4.6).

We welcome student papers and encourage students to publish their work, e.g. originating from practice-based research, which will be subject to constructive peer review process.

On submission, authors should indicate in which category their contribution is to be considered. If authors are uncertain of the category to which their paper is best suited, they should make this clear in their covering letter to the Editors.

You may wish to consider referring to the Equator guidelines <http://www.equator-network.org/>, when submitting your paper

### **Submission process**

Papers submitted to Public Health are carefully reviewed in the first instance by one of the Editors. Papers that do not meet editorial needs; are methodically flawed; or lack originality will be rejected. We will also reject papers that fail to provide sufficient ethical approval where required (see section 9.3) and we shall refer papers back for revision prior to any review if they do not comply with Journal style.

Papers which pass the Editorial review will be sent out to peer-review and will be reviewed by at least two external reviewers (short communications will only be sent to one reviewer). Reviewers are asked to consider whether the paper: contains new research findings or information; is relevant to public health practice, is technically sound; and is suitably presented.

### **1. How to submit your manuscript**

All manuscripts should be submitted online at <http://ees.elsevier.com/puhe/> by clicking on the 'submit paper' link. Authors will first need to register their details, and can then submit their paper.

Any author unable to submit online should contact the Editorial Office at [public.health@rsph.org.uk](mailto:public.health@rsph.org.uk)

### **2. Correspondence**

The official language of Public Health is British English. Support may be made available to overseas authors whose first language is not English.

Any correspondence (including books for review) should be sent to the Editorial Office as follows:

The Editors  
Public Health Editorial Office  
The Royal Society for Public Health  
John Snow House  
59 Mansell Street  
London  
E1 8AN  
Tel: +44 (0)20 3177 1632  
Fax: +44 (0)20 3177 1601  
E-mail: [public.health@rsph.org.uk](mailto:public.health@rsph.org.uk)

### **Submission checklist**

You can use this list to carry out a final check of your submission before you send it to the journal for review. Please check the relevant section in this Guide for Authors for more details.

### **Ensure that the following items are present:**

One author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:

- E-mail address
- Full postal address

All necessary files have been uploaded:

*Manuscript:*

- Include keywords
- All figures (include relevant captions)
- All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
- Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided
- Indicate clearly if color should be used for any figures in print

*Graphical Abstracts / Highlights files* (where applicable)  
*Supplemental files* (where applicable)

Further considerations

- Manuscript has been 'spell checked' and 'grammar checked'
- All references mentioned in the Reference List are cited in the text, and vice versa
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet)
- A competing interests statement is provided, even if the authors have no competing interests to declare
- Journal policies detailed in this guide have been reviewed
- Referee suggestions and contact details provided, based on journal requirements

For further information, visit our [Support Center](#).

## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

### ***Ethics in publishing***

Please see our information pages on [Ethics in publishing](#) and [Ethical guidelines for journal publication](#).

### ***Human and animal rights***

Public Health is a member of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), for more information please visit <http://publicationethics.org>

Papers describing research including human subjects will not be considered if ethical approval has not been sought.

Work on human beings that is submitted to Public Health should comply with the principles laid down in the Declaration of Helsinki; Recommendations guiding physicians in biomedical research involving human subjects. Adopted by the 18th World Medical Assembly, Helsinki, Finland, June 1964, amended by the 29th World Medical Assembly, Tokyo, Japan, October 1975, the 35th World Medical Assembly, Venice, Italy, October 1983, and the 41st World Medical Assembly, Hong Kong, September 1989.

The manuscript should contain a statement that the work has been approved by the appropriate ethical committees related to the institution(s) in which it was performed and that subjects gave informed consent to the work.

Studies involving experiments with animals must state that their care was in accordance with institution guidelines.

Studies on patients or volunteers require ethics committee approval and informed consent which should be documented in your paper. Patients have a right to privacy. Therefore identifying information, including patients images, names, initials, or hospital numbers, should not be included in videos, recordings, written descriptions, photographs, and pedigrees unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and you have obtained written informed consent for publication in print and electronic form from the patient (or parent, guardian or next of kin where applicable). If such consent is made subject to any conditions, Elsevier must be made aware of all such conditions. Written consents must be provided to Elsevier on request. Even where consent has been given, identifying details should be omitted if they are not essential. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic pedigrees, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning and editors should so note. If such consent has not been obtained, personal details of patients included in any part of the paper and in any supplementary materials (including all illustrations and videos) must be removed before submission.

### ***Declaration of interest***

All authors must disclose any financial and personal relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) their work. Examples of potential competing interests include employment, consultancies, stock ownership, honoraria, paid expert testimony, patent applications/registrations, and grants or other funding. Authors must disclose any interests in two places: 1. A summary declaration of interest statement in the title page file (if double-blind) or the manuscript file (if single-blind). If there are no interests to declare then please state this: 'Declarations of interest: none'. This summary statement will be ultimately published if the article is accepted.

2. Detailed disclosures as part of a separate Declaration of Interest form, which forms part of the journal's official records. It is important for potential interests to be declared in both places and that the information matches. [More information](#).

Upon submission authors will be required to declare funding, competing interests and to indicate whether ethical approval was sought. This information must also be inserted into the manuscript under the 'Acknowledgements' section with the headings below. If there are no declarations to make, the following statements should be inserted into the manuscript:

Funding: None

Competing interests: None declared

Ethical approval: Not required (please add a brief explanation as to why ethical approval was not needed for this study).

### **Submission declaration and verification**

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously (except in the form of an abstract, a published lecture or academic thesis, see '[Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication](#)' for more information), that it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere, that its publication is approved by all authors and tacitly or explicitly by the responsible authorities where the work was carried out, and that, if accepted, it will not be published elsewhere in the same form, in English or in any other language, including electronically without the written consent of the copyright-holder. To verify originality, your article may be checked by the originality detection service [Crossref Similarity Check](#).

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Inclusive language acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities. Articles should make no assumptions about the beliefs or commitments of any reader, should contain nothing which might imply that one individual is superior to another on the grounds of race, sex, culture or any other characteristic, and should use inclusive language throughout. Authors should ensure that writing is free from bias, for instance by using 'he or she', 'his/her' instead of 'he' or 'his', and by making use of job titles that are free of stereotyping (e.g. 'chairperson' instead of 'chairman' and 'flight attendant' instead of 'stewardess').

### **Contributors**

Each author is required to declare his or her individual contribution to the article: all authors must have materially participated in the research and/or article preparation, so roles for all authors should be described. The statement that all authors have approved the final article should be true and included in the disclosure.

### **Authorship**

All authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted.

### **Changes to authorship**

Authors are expected to consider carefully the list and order of authors **before** submitting their manuscript and provide the definitive list of authors at the time of the original submission. Any addition, deletion or rearrangement of author names in the authorship list should be made only **before** the manuscript has been accepted and only if approved by the journal Editor. To request such a change, the Editor must receive the following from the **corresponding author**: (a) the reason for the change in author list and (b) written confirmation (e-mail, letter) from all authors that they agree with the addition, removal or rearrangement. In the case of addition or removal of authors, this includes confirmation from the author being added or removed.

Only in exceptional circumstances will the Editor consider the addition, deletion or rearrangement of authors **after** the manuscript has been accepted. While the Editor considers the request, publication of the manuscript will be suspended. If the manuscript has already been published in an online issue, any requests approved by the Editor will result in a corrigendum.

### *Reporting clinical trials*

Randomized controlled trials should be presented according to the CONSORT guidelines. At manuscript submission, authors must provide the CONSORT checklist accompanied by a flow diagram that illustrates the progress of patients through the trial, including recruitment, enrollment, randomization, withdrawal and completion, and a detailed description of the randomization procedure. The [CONSORT checklist and template flow diagram](#) are available online.

### *Registration of clinical trials*

Registration in a public trials registry is a condition for publication of clinical trials in this journal in accordance with [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#) recommendations. Trials must register at or before the onset of patient enrolment. The clinical trial registration number should be included at the end of the abstract of the article. A clinical trial is defined as any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects of health outcomes. Health-related interventions include any intervention used to modify a biomedical or health-related outcome (for example drugs, surgical procedures, devices, behavioural treatments, dietary interventions, and process-of-care changes). Health outcomes include any biomedical or health-related measures obtained in patients or participants, including pharmacokinetic measures and adverse events. Purely observational studies (those in which the assignment of the medical intervention is not at the discretion of the investigator) will not require registration.

### **Copyright**

Upon acceptance of an article, authors will be asked to complete a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' (see [more information](#) on this). An e-mail will be sent to the corresponding author confirming receipt of the manuscript together with a 'Journal Publishing Agreement' form or a link to the online version of this agreement.

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## Submission

Our online submission system guides you stepwise through the process of entering your article details and uploading your files. The system converts your article files to a single PDF file used in the peer-review process. Editable files (e.g., Word, LaTeX) are required to typeset your article for final publication. All correspondence, including notification of the Editor's decision and requests for revision, is sent by e-mail.

### Submit your article

Please submit your article via <http://ees.elsevier.com/puhe>.

## PREPARATION

### Double-blind review

This journal uses double-blind review, which means the identities of the authors are concealed from the reviewers, and vice versa. [More information](#) is available on our website. To facilitate this, please include the following separately:

*Title page (with author details)*: This should include the title, authors' names, affiliations, acknowledgements and any Declaration of Interest statement, and a complete address for the corresponding author including an e-mail address.

*Blinded manuscript (no author details)*: The main body of the paper (including the references, figures, tables and any acknowledgements) should not include any identifying information, such as the authors' names or affiliations.

### Use of word processing software

It is important that the file be saved in the native format of the word processor used. The text should be in single-column format. Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. In particular, do not use the word processor's options to justify text or to hyphenate words. However, do use bold face, italics, subscripts, superscripts etc. When preparing tables, if you are using a table grid, use only one grid for each individual table and not a grid for each row. If no grid is used, use tabs, not spaces, to align columns. The electronic text should be prepared in a way very similar to that of conventional manuscripts (see also the [Guide to Publishing with Elsevier](#)). Note that source files of figures, tables and text graphics will be required whether or not you embed your figures in the text. See also the section on Electronic artwork.

To avoid unnecessary errors you are strongly advised to use the 'spell-check' and 'grammar-check' functions of your word processor.

### Article structure

#### 4.2 Original research, including evaluation papers

[Click here for an example](#)

Papers should be clear, precise and logical and should not normally exceed 3,000 words.

Original research papers should be set out as follows:

- Covering letter-the letter must contain: why the submission is appropriate for publication in Public Health; what is known about the topic discussed; what your study adds; and confirmation that the paper has not been published elsewhere
- Title page- bearing title, all authors' initials, surname, main degrees (two only) and the name and location of the institution(s) where the work was done. The author to whom proofs and correspondence should be sent should be clearly indicated with correct address, e-mail, telephone and fax details.
- Abstract. This should be structured under the following headings:

Objectives

Study design

Methods

Results

Conclusions

- Keywords. 3-6 keywords should follow the abstract
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion

- Acknowledgements including declarations: Statements of ethical approval, funding and competing interests (see section 9)
- References (see section 10)

Please note that any costs for reproducing material whose copyright is not held by the authors or the RSPH is to be met by the authors.

#### Tables and figures

Tables and figures should be kept to a minimum. Tables must be comprehensible without reference to the text if possible. References can be cited in the tables if needed. Authors should indicate at approximately what point in the text the table should appear. Figures, graphs, drawings etc. should not be over complex and must be intelligible when reduced in size for printing. They should be on separate sheets, numbered and with legends.

#### Tables

Number tables consecutively in accordance with their appearance in the text. Place footnotes to tables below the table body and indicate them with superscript lowercase letters. Avoid vertical rules. Be sparing in the use of tables and ensure that the data presented in tables do not duplicate results described elsewhere in the article.

### 4.3 Short communications

A short communication is preferred for the submission of important preliminary observations or data that does not warrant publication as a full paper. Short communications should be approximately 500-1500 words in length and provide adequate information to allow for the same peer review given to other submissions.

- A structured abstract will be required during the online submission process.
- Keywords will also be required. However, specific sections, such as Methods, should not be used in the manuscript itself.
- A short communication can include one table or figure and up to 10 references. Preliminary data published as a short communication will not preclude subsequent publication of more complete results if the work is significantly expanded.

### 4.4 Review papers

[Click here for an example](#)

Systematic Review papers presenting exhaustive, critical assessments of the published literature on relevant public health topics or questions will be considered. Such reviews should be prepared in strict compliance with MOOSE or PRISMA guidelines or with Cochrane's complementary guidelines for systematic reviews of health promotion and public health interventions, as appropriate. Public Health encourages authors to use alternative databases covering scientific literature from low- and middle-income countries not indexed in the traditional international databases (i.e. Medline, Web of Science). All systematic reviews need to be submitted with a supporting statement of which guideline has been used in the preparation of the review.

Narrative Review papers will be considered by Public Health. Whilst no formal guidelines for such reviews exist, authors should be very clear in what criteria they have used for the selection of studies and describe the methods used to undertake the review in the body of the paper. Generally speaking, narrative reviews will only be considered where the author(s) are clearly experts in the research field under consideration or the public health issue under consideration is not amenable to systematic review. The reviews needs to be submitted with a supporting statement justifying the appropriateness of undertaking a narrative review.

Review papers should not exceed 3000 words. They should include a Structured Abstract: Tables/ Illustrations can be included up to a maximum of 5, though larger tables may be included only on the electronic version of the paper.

References: up to a maximum of 100.

#### 4.5 Letters

Readers are encouraged to submit Letters to the Editors and these can include responses to previously published papers or original data.

Authors will be given the opportunity to comment and respond to any correspondence we intend to include in the 'Letters to the Editors' regarding their previously published manuscript.

#### 4.6 Celebrating Public Health Lives

[Click here for an example](#)

Papers should be clear, precise and logical and should not normally exceed 1,500 words in length.

An abstract is not required and specific sections, such as methods, discussion etc, should not be used.

Keywords are not required.

#### **Essential title page information**

- **Title.** Concise and informative. Titles are often used in information-retrieval systems. Avoid abbreviations and formulae where possible.
- **Author names and affiliations.** Please clearly indicate the given name(s) and family name(s) of each author and check that all names are accurately spelled. You can add your name between parentheses in your own script behind the English transliteration. Present the authors' affiliation addresses (where the actual work was done) below the names. Indicate all affiliations with a lower-case superscript letter immediately after the author's name and in front of the appropriate address. Provide the full postal address of each affiliation, including the country name and, if available, the e-mail address of each author.
- **Corresponding author.** Clearly indicate who will handle correspondence at all stages of refereeing and publication, also post-publication. This responsibility includes answering any future queries about Methodology and Materials. **Ensure that the e-mail address is given and that contact details are kept up to date by the corresponding author.**
- **Present/permanent address.** If an author has moved since the work described in the article was done, or was visiting at the time, a 'Present address' (or 'Permanent address') may be indicated as a footnote to that author's name. The address at which the author actually did the work must be retained as the main, affiliation address. Superscript Arabic numerals are used for such footnotes.

#### **Highlights**

Highlights are mandatory for this journal as they help increase the discoverability of your article via search engines. They consist of a short collection of bullet points that capture the novel results of your research as well as new methods that were used during the study (if any). Please have a look at the examples here: [example Highlights](#).

Highlights should be submitted in a separate editable file in the online submission system. Please use 'Highlights' in the file name and include 3 to 5 bullet points (maximum 85 characters, including spaces, per bullet point).

#### *Graphical abstract*

Although a graphical abstract is optional, its use is encouraged as it draws more attention to the online article. The graphical abstract should summarize the contents of the article in a concise, pictorial form designed to capture the attention of a wide readership. Graphical abstracts should be submitted as a separate file in the online submission system. Image size: Please provide an image with a minimum of 531 × 1328 pixels (h × w) or proportionally more. The image should be readable at a size of 5 × 13 cm using a regular screen resolution of 96 dpi. Preferred file types: TIFF, EPS, PDF or MS Office files. You can view [Example Graphical Abstracts](#) on our information site.

Authors can make use of Elsevier's [Illustration Services](#) to ensure the best presentation of their images and in accordance with all technical requirements.

#### *Acknowledgements*

Collate acknowledgements in a separate section at the end of the article before the references and do not, therefore, include them on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. List here those individuals who provided help during the research (e.g., providing language help, writing assistance or proof reading the article, etc.).

### *Formatting of funding sources*

List funding sources in this standard way to facilitate compliance to funder's requirements:

Funding: This work was supported by the National Institutes of Health [grant numbers xxxx, yyyy]; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle, WA [grant number zzzz]; and the United States Institutes of Peace [grant number aaaa].

It is not necessary to include detailed descriptions on the program or type of grants and awards. When funding is from a block grant or other resources available to a university, college, or other research institution, submit the name of the institute or organization that provided the funding.

If no funding has been provided for the research, please include the following sentence:

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

### **Artwork**

#### *Electronic artwork*

##### *General points*

- Make sure you use uniform lettering and sizing of your original artwork.
- Embed the used fonts if the application provides that option.
- Aim to use the following fonts in your illustrations: Arial, Courier, Times New Roman, Symbol, or use fonts that look similar.
- Number the illustrations according to their sequence in the text.
- Use a logical naming convention for your artwork files.
- Provide captions to illustrations separately.
- Size the illustrations close to the desired dimensions of the published version.
- Submit each illustration as a separate file.
- Ensure that color images are accessible to all, including those with impaired color vision.

A detailed [guide on electronic artwork](#) is available.

**You are urged to visit this site; some excerpts from the detailed information are given here.**

#### *Formats*

If your electronic artwork is created in a Microsoft Office application (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) then please supply 'as is' in the native document format.

Regardless of the application used other than Microsoft Office, when your electronic artwork is finalized, please 'Save as' or convert the images to one of the following formats (note the resolution requirements for line drawings, halftones, and line/halftone combinations given below):

EPS (or PDF): Vector drawings, embed all used fonts.

TIFF (or JPEG): Color or grayscale photographs (halftones), keep to a minimum of 300 dpi.

TIFF (or JPEG): Bitmapped (pure black & white pixels) line drawings, keep to a minimum of 1000 dpi.

TIFF (or JPEG): Combinations bitmapped line/half-tone (color or grayscale), keep to a minimum of 500 dpi.

#### **Please do not:**

- Supply files that are optimized for screen use (e.g., GIF, BMP, PICT, WPG); these typically have a low number of pixels and limited set of colors;
- Supply files that are too low in resolution;
- Submit graphics that are disproportionately large for the content.

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5. Cancer Research UK. Cancer statistics reports for the UK, <http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/aboutcancer/statistics/cancerstatsreport/>; 2003 [accessed 13 March 2003].

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